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Archives and the New NPS Collections Management System

In 1998, almost 300 National Park Service sites received a new museum collections management program that includes a component for fully describing archival collections. The program is called ANCS+. It is a customized version of Re:discovery for Windows, a product of Re:discovery Software, Inc., of Charlottesville, Virginia.

The archives component of the program includes the data elements needed to fully describe collections at the collection, series, file unit, and item levels. The program provides parks with the ability to upload data into national bibliographic systems. It supports data interchange with existing nationwide bibliographic utilities, such as RLIN. Users can import, export, create, and update MARC records.

Other features of ANCS+ include a powerful and easy-to-use word search function, imaging capability, a structured lexicon for managing descriptive terminology, an integrated report writer, and an Internet interface. The program integrates well with a variety of software packages. It includes reports that produce finding aids and container and folder lists. It also provides a researcher registration system and tracks duplication requests.

The archives component of ANCS+ was developed by the Museum Management Program of the National Center for Cultural Resources Stewardship and Partnership Programs with significant contributions from field staff. These include Mary Jo Pugh, Taylor Horton, Lisbit Collins Bailey, and Erica Schoenhals Toland at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park; Diane Godwin at the Northeast Museum Services Center; Lynn Marie Mitchell and Khaleel Saba at the Western Archeological and Conservation Center; and Amy Verone and Susan Sarna at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site.

ANCS+ is an exciting step into the future. It brings a new level of technology and professionalization to the management of National Park Service archival collections. Most importantly, the program will greatly increase staff and public access to these collections.

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The screenshot shows the 'Re:discovery' application window with the 'Collection' tab selected. The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, Record, List, View, Select, Help) and a toolbar with various icons. Below the toolbar, there are tabs for 'Collection', 'Series', 'File Unit', and 'Item'. The 'Collection' tab is active, displaying fields for 'Collect Nbr>', 'Catalog #>', 'Collection Title', 'Location', 'Accession #>', 'Addl Acc#>', 'Incl. Dates>', 'Bulk Dates>', 'Restrictions' (set to 'NO'), and a list of descriptive fields: Extent, History, Scope, Orgn/Arrgn, Provenance, Language, Find Aids, Assoc Matl, Notes, and Proc By. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Add By>', 'Chg By>', and 'Get from Collections Management'.

The screenshot shows the 'Re:discovery' application window with the 'Series' tab selected. The interface is similar to the Collection tab, but the 'Collect #>' field is now 'Series Nbr>'. The 'Accession #>' field is still present and set to '00000'. The 'Addl Acc#>' field is also present. The 'Restrictions' field is set to 'NO'. The list of descriptive fields is the same as in the Collection tab. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Add By>', 'Chg By>', and 'Add'l OK Cancel Save'.

The screenshot shows the 'Re:discovery' application window with the 'Item' tab selected. The interface is similar to the previous tabs, but the 'Collect #>' field is now 'Item Nbr>'. The 'Accession #>' field is still present and set to '00000'. The 'Addl Acc#>' field is also present. The 'Restrictions' field is set to 'NO'. The list of descriptive fields is the same as in the previous tabs. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Add By>', 'Chg By>', and 'Add'l OK Cancel Save'.

ANCS+ Archives Module screens for Collection, Series, and Item level cataloging.